



Commuter ChoiceSM Leadership Initiative



Commuter ChoiceSM Leadership Initiative Phone Forum Federal and State Funding Opportunities To Support Commuter Choice

July 10, 2002

Available exclusively to Commuter ChoiceSM Employers, phone forums provide cutting-edge information on a range of topics related to commuter benefits. Moderated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), these forums feature experts on key topic areas.

On July 10, 2002, the Commuter ChoiceSM Leadership Initiative (CCLI) held a phone forum focusing on federal and state funding opportunities to support commuter choice. Erik Herzog, EPA forum moderator, provided opening remarks and introduced the featured participants.

Featured Participant Presentations

Susan Bullard, EPA Office of Transportation and Air Quality

Susan Bullard is the director of outreach for EPA's transportation and air quality programs. Ms. Bullard provided an overview of two programs that might be of use to Commuter ChoiceSM Employers (CCEs).

Section 105 grants are administered through the Mobile Source Outreach Assistance program. This unique program provides grants for education and outreach activities to state and local air management agencies. Private companies and other non-governmental organizations are encouraged to create partnerships with eligible organizations. To receive funding, projects must be mobile-source related and replicable (e.g., handbooks or templates that can be customized for use elsewhere). For more information visit www.epa.gov/otaq/rfp.htm or e-mail Ms. Bullard at bullard.susan@epa.gov. If you would like a list of previously fund-

ed projects, e-mail CCLI at commuterchoice@epa.gov.

"It All Adds Up to Cleaner Air" is a collaboration between EPA's Office of Transportation and Air Quality and the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Designed to help regional, state, and community efforts to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution, the program provides a variety of high-quality customizable outreach materials that CCEs can use to support their programs. For more information visit www.italladdsup.gov or e-mail Kathy Daniel at kathy.daniel@fhwa.dot.gov.

Dan Wheeler, Federal Highway Administration

Dan Wheeler provided an overview of the **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)**, which funds projects and programs in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas that reduce transportation related emissions. Any public agency is eligible, and grants frequently are awarded to public/private partnerships.

For more information on grant schedules and application forms, contact your local metropolitan planning organization (MPO) or state department of transportation. To find your MPO, visit www.ampo.org or www.narc.org. For other questions, e-mail Mr. Wheeler at daniel.wheeler@fhwa.dot.gov.

Shirley Kieviet, URM Stores, Inc.

Shirley Kieviet is the employee transportation coordinator (ETC) for URM Stores, Inc. of Spokane, Washington. In 1999, Ms. Kieviet obtained a CMAQ grant

through the Spokane County Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) office. With the funds, URM built a bike shack and administered an employee incentive program. According to Ms. Kieviet, the application process and followup reporting were simple and took very little time, and the county reimbursed expenses as the company incurred them. She noted that grant applications were funded either in their entirety or not at all (i.e., applications were never given partial funding). URM's incentive program was effective, but now that the grant money has expired, Ms. Kieviet needs to find new funding or make other adjustments to continue the program's success.

Open Discussion

Following the featured speakers' presentations, other forum participants asked questions and provided additional information on some of the points discussed.

- Mel Johnson at the Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) noted that her organization has used CMAQ funds to expand bus pass and rideshare programs. PATH is also examining the use of station cars (car-sharing systems).
- Diane Davidson of the TMA Group of Franklin, Tennessee noted that CMAQ funds can be used for vanpools, incentive programs, outreach materials, bicycle infrastructure, and parking cashout. Ms. Davidson also mentioned surface transportation plan (STP) funds, which are often allocated to municipalities, but can be accessed by transit management agencies.
- Stephanie Babcock of the Washington State Attorney General's Office asked about using CMAQ funds for purchasing hybrid cars and providing subsidies to bikers and walkers. Dan Wheeler said that there is a possibility of using

CMAQ to subsidize hybrid vehicles. He did not think there was a precedent for direct subsidies for bikers or walkers, but stated that CMAQ has been used for bike facilities, such as bike racks, lockers, and showers.

- Angela Maglione of Alaska Airlines said that they have used CMAQ funds for carpool vouchers, transit passes, and gift certificates for bikers and walkers.
- The **FHWA Value Pricing Pilot Program** provides another funding opportunity for CCEs. Among other things, the program funds implementation of areawide parking cash-out programs and areawide parking charges with variable fees targeted toward congestion reduction. For more information, visit the program's Web site at www.hhh.umn.edu/centers/slp/conpric.

Closing

Mr. Herzog closed by thanking the featured participants for their enlightening presentations and thanking all Commuter ChoiceSM Employers for participating in the forum. He invited employers to provide suggestions and ideas for future forums and reminded them that CCLI is available for assistance by calling the hotline at 888 856-3131 or contacting commuterchoice@epa.gov.